

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (canceled)

13. (previously presented) In combination with a stationary closed outdoor umbrella including a body, the improvement which comprises:

a rigid ring, wherein the ring removably circumscribes the body of the closed outdoor umbrella to prevent said umbrella from opening; and
a handle, wherein the handle is fixably coupled to the ring, wherein the handle is utilized to place the ring on the umbrella, and wherein the handle comprises a rod-like member and a hand-hold, wherein the rod-like member extends between the ring and the hand-hold, wherein the rod-like member comprises a proximal end and a distal end, wherein the hand-hold is perpendicular to the rod-like member, wherein the ring is perpendicular to the rod-like member, wherein the hand-hold is coupled to the proximal end, and wherein the ring is coupled to the distal end.

14. (canceled)

15. (original) The apparatus as recited in claim 13, wherein the ring comprises at least one cutout area, and wherein the cutout area is fitted with a removable, user-configurable embellishment.

Appl. No. 10/713,985
Amdt. dated March 19, 2007
Reply to Office action of July 5, 2006

16. (canceled)

17. (original) The apparatus as recited in claim 15, wherein the at least one radial cutout area comprises a hole cut through a sidewall of the ring.

18. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 13, wherein the ring has an inner diameter less than the largest outer diameter of the closed outdoor umbrella.

19. (canceled)

20. (canceled)